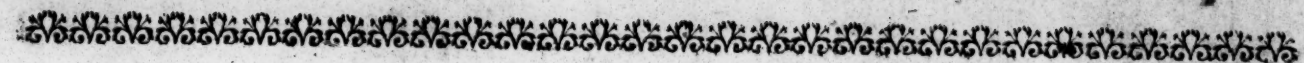
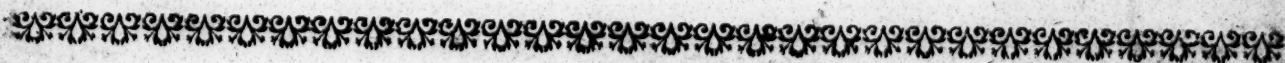
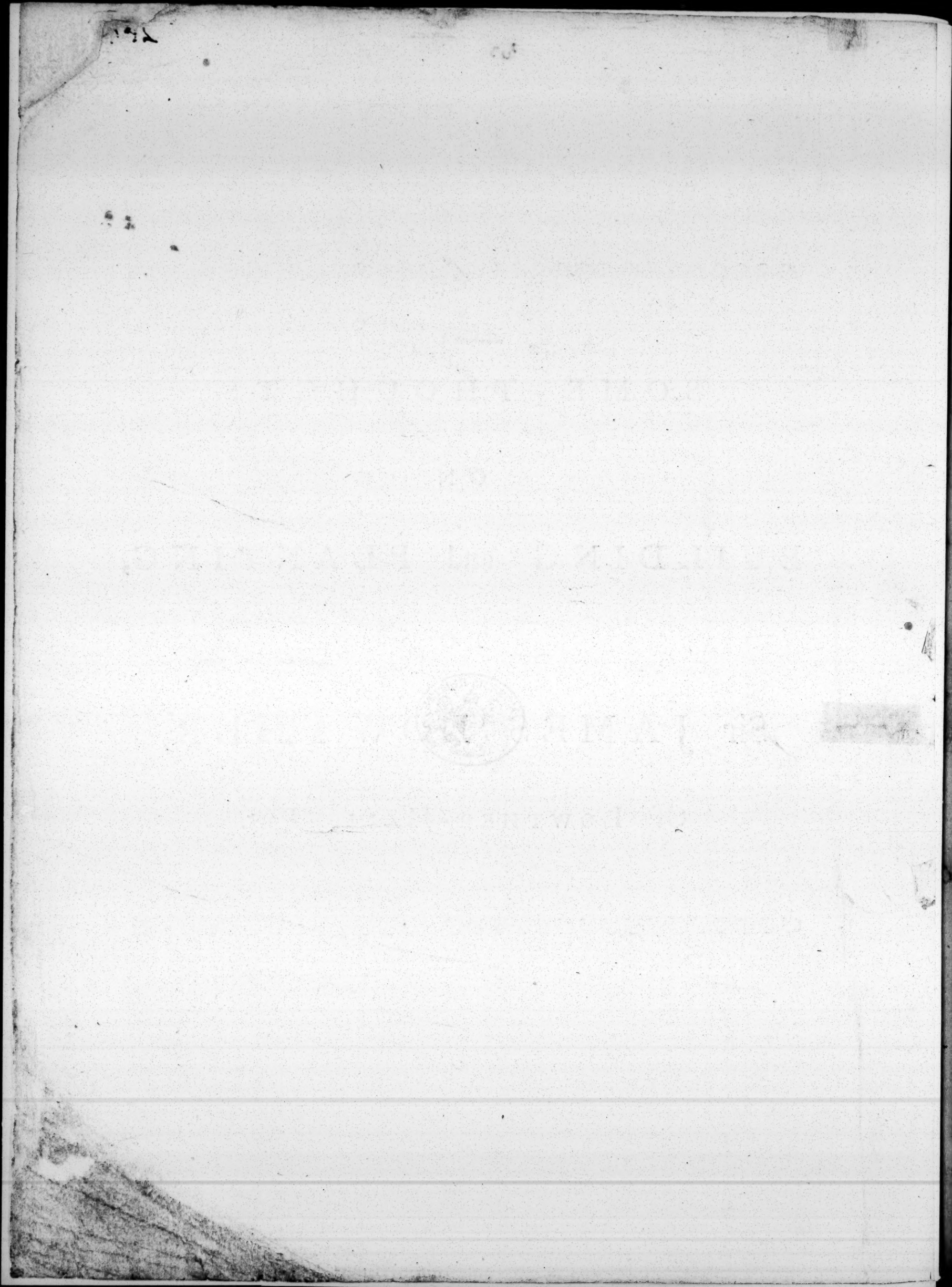


1466 K. 23



SOME THOUGHTS
ON
BUILDING and PLANTING,
TO
Sir JAMES LOWTHER,
Of LOWTHER-HALL, Bart.





*Σ H Vaughan 1755 Lond
June 20*



T O
T W O L A D I E S

At their RETURN from Viewing

The MINES near WHITEHAVEN.



WELCOME to light, advent'rous pair!
Thrice welcome to the balmy air
From sulphurous damp in caverns deep,
Where subterraneous thunders sleep,
Or, wak'd, with dire Ætnæan found
Bellow the trembling mountain round,

From sulphurous damp, &c.] The coal mines near Whitehaven are greatly infested with fulminating damp; large quantities of them being frequently collected in those deserted works, which are not ventilated with perpetual currents of fresh air: and, in such works, they often remain for a long time, without doing any

B

Till

Till to the frightened realms of day
 Thro' flaming mouths they force their way;
 From bursting streams, and burning rocks,
 From nature's fierce intestine shocks;
 From the dark mansions of despair
 Welcome once more to light and air!

10

BUT why explore that world of night
 Conceal'd till then from female sight?
 Such grace and beauty why confine
 One moment to a dreary mine?

15

WAS it because your curious eye
 The secrets of the Earth would spy,

mischief. But when, by some accident, they are set on fire, they then produce dreadful explosions, very destructive to the miners; and bursting out of the pits with great impetuosity, like the fiery eruptions from burning mountains, force along with them ponderous bodies to a great height in the air.

From burning rocks, &c.] The coal in these mines hath, several times, been set on fire by the fulminating damp, and hath continued burning for many months; until large streams of water were conducted into the mines, and suffered to fill those parts where the coal was on fire. By such fires, several collieries have been intirely destroyed; of which there are instances near Newcastle, and in other parts of England, and in the shire of Fife in Scotland; in some of which places, the fire has continued burning for ages. But more mines have been ruined by inundations.

How

How intervein'd rich minerals glow,
How bubbling fountains learn to flow? 20

O R rather that the sons of day
Already own'd your rightful sway,
And therefore, like young Ammon, you
Another world would fain subdue?

W H A T tho' sage Prospero attend, 25
While you the cavern'd hill descend,
Tho', warn'd by him, with bended head
You shun the shelving roof, and tread
With cautious foot the rugged way,
While tapers strive to mimic day? 30
Tho' he with hundred gates and chains
The Demons of the mine restrains,

The demons of the mine restrains, &c.] In order to prevent, as much as possible, the collieries from being filled with those pernicious damps, it has been found necessary carefully to search for those crevices in the coal, from whence they issue out; and at those places, to confine them within a narrow space; and from those narrow spaces in which they are confined, to conduct them through long pipes into the open air; where being set on fire, they consume in perpetual flames, as they continually arise out of the earth.

To whom their parent, jealous Earth,
 To guard her hidden stores gave birth,
 At which, while kindred furies sung, 35
 With hideous joy pale Orcus rung;
 Tho' boiling with vain rage they fit
 Fix'd to the bottom of the pit,
 While at his beck the spi'rits of air
 With breath of heaven their taints repair; 40
 Or if they seek superior skies,
 Thro' ways assign'd by him they rise,
 Troop after troop at day expire
 In torments of perpetual fire;
 Tho' he with fury-quelling charms 45
 The whole infernal host disarms,
 And summons to your guarded fides
 A squadron of etherial guides,

And summons, &c.] Those who have the direction of these deep and extensive works, are obliged to use great care and art in keeping them continually ventilated with perpetual currents of fresh air; which afford the miners a constant supply of

You

You still, when we together view
 The dreadful enterprize and you,
 The public care and wonder go
 Of all above and all below.

50

FOR at your presence toil is o'er,
 The restless miner works no more.
 Nor strikes the flint, nor whirls the steel
 Of that strange spark-emitting wheel,
 Which, form'd by Prospero's magic care,
 Plays harmless in the sulphurous air,

55

that vital fluid, and expel out of the mines damps and other noxious exhalations, together with such other burnt and foul air, as is become poisonous and unfit for respiration.

Nor strikes the flint, &c.] It having been observed, by Mr. Spedding, who superintends these collieries, and to whom the author here gives the name of Prospero, that the fulminating damp could only be kindled by flame, and that it was not liable to be set on fire by red-hot iron, nor by the sparks produced by the collision of flint and steel, he invented a machine, in which while a steel wheel is turned round with a very rapid motion, and flints are applied thereto, great plenty of fiery sparks are emitted, that afford the miners such a light as enables them to carry on their work in close places, where the flame of a candle, or lamp, would occasion dreadful explosions. Without some invention of this sort, the working of these mines, so greatly annoyed with these inflameable damps, would long ago have been impracticable.

Without

Without a flame diffuses light,
 And makes the grisly cavern bright.
 His task secure the miner plies,
 Nor hears Tartarian tempests rise;
 But quits it now, and hastes away
 To this great Stygian holiday.

60

AGAPE the footy collier stands,
 His axe suspended in his hands,
 His Æthiopian teeth the while
 “ Grin horrible a ghastly smile,”
 To see two goddesses so fair
 Descend to him from fields of air.
 Not greater wonder seiz’d th’ abode
 Of gloomy Dis, infernal god,
 With pity when th’ Orphēan lyre
 Did ev’ry iron heart inspire,
 Sooth’d tortur’d ghosts with heavenly strains,
 And respited eternal pains.

65

70

75

BUT

B U T on you move thro' ways less steep
 To loftier chambers of the deep,
 Whose jetty pillars seem to groan
 Beneath a ponderous roof of stone. 80
 Then with increasing wonder gaze
 The dark inextricable maze,
 Where cavern crossing cavern meets,
 (City of subterraneous streets!)
 Where in a triple story end 85
 Mines that o'er mines by flights ascend.

But on you move, &c.] The reader may suppose that he hath entered these mines by an opening at the bottom of a hill, and hath already passed through a long adit, hewn in the rock, and arched over with brick, which is the principal road into them for men, and for horses; and which, by a steep descent, leads down to the lowest vein of coal. Being arrived at the coal, he may suppose himself still to descend, by ways less steep, till, after a journey of a mile and a half, he arrives at the profoundest parts of the mine. The greatest part of this descent is through spacious galleries, which continually intersect other galleries; all the coal being cut away except large pillars, which, in deep parts of the mine, are three yards high, and about twelve yards square at the base; such great strength being there required to support the ponderous roof.

A triple story, &c.] There are here three strata of coal, which lie at a considerable distance one above another. The mines wrought in these parallel strata have a communication by pits, and are compared by the author to the different stories of a building.

BUT

BUT who in order can relate
 What terrors still your steps await?
 How issuing from the sulphurous coal
 Thick Acherontic rivers roll?

90

How in close center of these mines,
 Where orient morning never shines,
 Nor the wing'd Zephyrs e're resort,
 Infernal Darkness holds her court?

How, breathless, with faint pace, and slow,
 Thro' her grim fultry realm you go,
 Till purer rising gales dispense
 Their cordials to the sick'ning sense?

95

Thick Acherontic rivers, &c.] The water that flows from the coal is collected into one stream, which runs towards the fire-engines. This water is yellow and turbid, from a mixture of ocher, and so very corrosive, that it quickly consumes iron.

How, breathless, with faint pace, and slow, &c.] Those who descend into these mines, find them most close and fultry in the middle parts, that are most remote from the pits and adits, and perceive them to grow cooler the nearer they approach to those pits which are sunk to the deepest parts of the mines; down which pits, large streams of fresh air are made to descend, and up which, the water is drawn out, by means of fire-engines.

YOUR

YOUR progress next the wondering muse
 Thro' narrow galleries pursues ; 100
 Where Earth, the miner's way to close,
 Did once the massy rock oppose :
 In vain : his daring axe he heaves,
 Tow'ards the black vein a passage cleaves :
 Dissever'd by the nitrous blast, 105
 The stubborn barrier bursts at last.
 Thus, urg'd by Hunger's clamorous call,
 Incessant Labour conquers all.

Where Earth, &c.] The vein of coal is not always regularly continued in the same inclined plain, but, instead thereof, the miners frequently meet with hard rock, which interrupts their further progress. At such places there seem to have been breaks in the earth, from the surface downwards ; one part of the earth seeming to have sunk down, while the part adjoining has remained in its antient situation. In some of these places, the earth may have sunk ten or twenty fathoms, or more ; in other places, less than one fathom. These breaks, the miners call Dykes ; and when they come at one of them, their first care is to discover whether the strata in the part adjoining be higher or lower than in the part where they have been working ; or (to use their own terms) whether the coal be cast down, or cast up. If it be cast down, they sink a pit to it ; but if it be cast up to any considerable height, they are oftentimes obliged, with great labour and expence, as at the place here described, to carry forwards a level or long gallery thro' the rock, until they again arrive at the stratum of coal.

I N spacious rooms once more you tread,
 Whose roofs with figures quaint o'erspread 110
 Wild nature paints with various dyes,
 With such as tinge the evening skies.

A different scene to this succeeds :
 The dreary road abruptly leads
 Down to the cold and humid caves, 115
 Where hissing fall the turbid waves.
 Resounding deep thro' glimmering shades
 The clank of chains your ears invades.
 Thro' pits profound from distant day
 Scarce travels down light's languid ray. 120
 High on huge axis heav'd, above,
 See ballanc'd beams unweary'd move !

Whose Roofs, &c.] These colours, with which the free-stone roof of the mines is beautifully variegated in many places, and which have the appearance of clouds, seem to proceed from exsudations of salts, ocher, and other earthy substances.

While

While pent within the iron womb
 Of boiling caldrons pants for room
 Expanded Steam, and shrinks, or swells,
 As cold restrains, or heat impells,

125

While pent within the iron womb, &c.] The author hath here taken occasion to celebrate the fire-engine, the invention of which does such honour to this nation. He has endeavoured to describe, in a poetic manner, the effects of the elastic steam, and the great power of the atmosphere; which, by their alternate actions, give force and motion to the beam of this engine, and by it, to the pump-rods, which elevate the water through tubes, and discharge it out of the mine. It appears, from pretty exact calculations, that it would require about 550 men, or a power equal to that of 110 horses, to work the pumps of one of the largest fire-engines now in use, (the diameter of whose cylinder is seventy inches) and thrice that number of men to keep an engine of this size constantly at work. And that as much water may be raised by an engine of this size kept constantly at work, as can be drawn up by 2520 men with rollers and buckets, after the manner now daily practised in many mines, or as much as can be borne up on the shoulders of twice that number of men; as is said to be done in some of the mines of Peru.—So great is the power of the air in one of those engines.

There are four fire-engines belonging to this colliery; which, when all at work, discharge from it about 1228 gallons every minute, at thirteen strokes; 1,768,320 gallons every twenty-four hours. By the four engines here employed, nearly twice the above-mentioned quantity of water might be discharged from mines that are not above sixty or seventy fathoms deep, which depth is rarely exceeded in the Newcastle collieries, or in any of the English collieries, those of Whitehaven excepted.

The reader may find an account of Savery's engine in Harris's *Lexicon Technicum*.—Many great improvements have been made to it since, and are daily making; several of which are related in the *Philosophical Transactions*. The best account of it, its various improvements and uses, is, I think, in Dr. Defaguliers's course of experimental philosophy, vol. II.

And, ready for the vacant space,
 Incumbent Air resumes his place,
 Depressing with stupendous force
 Whate'er resists his downward course,
 Pumps moved by rods from ponderous beams.
 Arrest the unsuspecting streams,
 Which soon a sluggish pool would lie ;
 Then spout them foaming to the sky.

130

SAGACIOUS Savery ! Taught by thee
 Discordant elements agree,
 Fire, water, air, heat, cold unite,
 And lifted in one service fight,
 Pure streams to thirsty cities send,
 Or deepest mines from floods defend.
 Man's richest gift thy work will shine ;
 Rome's aqueducts were poor to thine !

135

140

A T

A T last the long descent is o'er ;
 Above your heads the billows roar :
 High o'er your heads they roar in vain ;
 Not all the furies of the main
 The dark recess can e'er disclose,
 Rocks heap'd on rocks th' attempt oppose :
 Thrice Dover's cliff from you the tides
 With interposing roof divides !

145

150

FROM such abyss restor'd to light,
 Invade no more the realms of night.
 For heroines it may well suffice
 Once to have left these azure skies.

Above your heads, &c.] The mines are here sunk to the depth of one hundred and thirty fathoms, and are extended under the sea to places where there is, above them, sufficient depth of water for ships of large burden. These are the deepest coal-mines that have hitherto been wrought; and perhaps the miners have not in any other part of the globe, penetrated to so great a depth below the surface of the sea; the very deep mines in Hungary, Peru, and elsewhere, being situated in mountainous countries, where the surface of the earth is elevated to a great height above the level of the ocean.

Heroes

Heroes themselves, in days of yore, 155
 Bold as they were, achiev'd no more.
 Without a dread descent you may
 The mines in their effects survey,
 And with an easy eye look down
 On that fair port and happy town. 160

WHERE late along the naked strand,
 The fisher's cot did lonely stand,
 And his poor bark unshelter'd lay,
 Of every swelling surge the prey,
 Now lofty piers their arms extend, 165
 And with their strong embraces bend
 Round crowded fleets, which safe defy
 All storms that rend the wintry sky,
 And bulwarks beyond bulwarks chain
 The fury of the roaring main. 170
 The peopl'd vale fair dwellings fill,
 And lengthening streets ascend the hill ;

Where

Where Industry intent to thrive,
 Brings all her honey to the hive,
 Religion strikes with reverent awe,
 Example works th' effect of law,
 And Plenty's flowing cup we see
 Untainted yet by Luxury.

175

THESE are the glories of the mine!
 Creative Commerce, these are thine!

180

The glories of the mine, &c.] These mines were first wrought, for foreign consumption, by Sir John Lowther, Bart. one of the Lords of the Admiralty in the reign of King William; a person of great abilities, and a generous benefactor to his native country; who, by the encouragements which he gave to tradesmen and artificers of all kinds to settle at Whitehaven, may be esteemed the founder of that town. His son and successor, Sir James Lowther, pursuing the same plan, has brought these mines to their present state of perfection. It has been computed, that these two gentlemen, in the compass of a century (which time they have enjoyed these mines) have expended in one of them only upwards of half a million sterling.—The money returned hither for coals exported hence, greatly contributes to enable this remote country to pay those large sums, that are continually drained out of it in taxes and customs, in rents to absentees, and for clothing and various other necessary commodities, which those parts do not afford.—By this trade, and its consequences, the town of Whitehaven has been raised, from very low beginnings, to its present state; the country round it improved; and great numbers of hardy sailors, and other useful artificers trained up to serve their King and country in the navy, as well as in the home and foreign trades of the kingdom.

HERE

HERE while delighted you impart
 Delight to every eye and heart,
 Behold, grown jealous of your stay,
 Your native Stream his charms display,
 To court you to his banks again ; } 185
 Now wind in wanton waves his train, }
 Now spread into a chrystal plain ; }
 Then hid by pendent rocks would steal,
 But tuneful Falls his course reveal,
 As down the bending vale he roves } 190
 Thro' Yanwath woods, and Buckholme's groves ;
 Whose broad o'erspreading boughs beneath
 Warbling he flows, while Zephyrs breathe.

HERE softly swells the spacious lawn,
 Where bounds the buck, and skips the fawn, } 200

Your native stream, &c.] The river Lowther.

Then hid by pendent rocks, &c.] See, in Mr. Dalton's Drawings, a view of this river near the bridge and church of Askham.

As down the bending vale, &c.] See his view (taken from Clifton) of the river winding between Yanwath and Buckholme woods round the Elyfian fields.

Here softly swells, &c.] See his view, on a small scale, taken from Askham-

THERE

Or, couch'd beneath the hawthorn-trees,
In dappled groupes enjoy the breeze.

AMID yon funny plain, alone,
To patriarchal rev'ence grown,
An oak for many an age has stood 205
Himself a widely waving wood,
While men and herds, with swift decay,
Race after race, have pass'd away.
See still his central trunk sustain
Huge boughs, which round o'erhang the plain, 210
And hospitable shade inclose,
Where flocks and herds at ease repose!

THERE the brown fells ascend the sky,
Below, the green inclosures lye;
Along their sloping sides supine 215
The peaceful villages recline:

fell, of the situation of Lowther-hall, park, &c. terminated by a long range of very high mountains, called Cross-fell.

On azure roofs bright sun-beams play,
And make the meanest dwelling gay.

Thus oft the wise all-ruling mind

Is to the lowly cottage kind,

220

Bids there His beams of favour fall,

While forrow clouds the lofty hall,

That This may fear his awful frown,

And grateful That his goodness own.

IF, grown familiar to the sight,

225

Lowther itself should less delight,

Then change the scene : To nature's pride,

Sweet Kefwick's vale, the muse will guide.

The muse, who trod th' enchanted ground,

Who sail'd the wondrous lake around,

230

With you will haste once more to hail

The beauteous brook of Borrodale.

On azure roofs, &c.] The houses of this country are covered with a beautiful blue slate.

FROM

FROM savage parent gentle stream !
 Be thou the Muse's favourite theme :
 O soft insinuating glide 235
 Silent along the meadow's side,
 Smooth o'er the sandy bottom pass
 Resplendent all thro' fluid glass,
 Unless upon thy yielding breast
 Their painted heads the lillies rest, 240
 To where in deep capacious bed
 The widely liquid lake is spread.

LET other streams rejoyce to roar
 Down the rough rocks of dread Lodore,
 Rush raving on with boisterous sweep, 245
 And foaming rend the frightened deep,
 Thy gentle Genius shrinks away
 From such a rude unequal fray ;

Of dread Lodore, &c.] A very high cascade here falls into the lake of Derwent-
 water, near where Borrodale-beck (or brook) enters into it, as is described above.

Thro' thine own native dale, where rise
 Tremendous rocks amid the skies,
 Thy waves with patience slowly wind,
 Till they the smoothest channel find,
 Soften the horrors of the scene,
 And thro' confusion flow serene.

250

Horrors like these at first alarm,
 But soon with savage grandeur charm
 And raise to noblest thought the mind :
 Thus by thy fall, Lodore, reclin'd,
 The craggy cliff, impendent wood,
 Whose shadows mix o'er half the flood,
 The gloomy clouds, which solemn sail,
 Scarce lifted by the languid gale
 O'er the cap'd hill, and darken'd vale ;
 The ravening kite, and bird of Jove,
 Which round th' aerial ocean rove,
 And, floating on the billowy sky,
 With full expanded pennons fly,

255

260

265

Their

Their flutt'ring or their bleating prey
 Thence with death-dooming eye survey;
 Channels by rocky torrents torn, 270
 Rocks to the lake in thunder born,
 Or such as o'er our heads appear
 Suspended in their mid career,
 To start again at His command,
 Who rules fire, water, air, and land, 275
 I view with wonder and delight,
 A pleasing, tho' an awful sight:
 For, seen with them, the verdant Isles
 Soften with more delicious smiles,
 More tempting twine their opening bowers, 280
 More lively glow the purple flowers,
 More smoothly slopes the border gay,
 In fairer circle bends the bay,

Channels by rocky torrents torn, &c.] For an account of an extraordinary storm in a part of this country, called St. John's Vale, by which numerous fragments of rocks were driven down from the mountains, along with cataracts of water, see a letter from Cockermouth, inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine of October, 1754.

And

And last, to fix our wand'ring eyes,
 Thy roofs, O Keswick, brighter rise 285
 The lake and lofty hills between,
 Where Giant Skiddow shuts the scene.

SUPREME of mountains, Skiddow, hail!
 To whom all Britain sinks a vale!
 Lo, his imperial brow I see 290
 From foul usurping vapours free!
 'Twere glorious now his side to climb,
 Boldly to scale his top sublime,
 And thence—My muse, these flights forbear,
 Nor with wild raptures tire the fair. 295
 Hills, rocks, and dales have been too long
 The subject of thy rambling song.

Where Giant Skiddow, &c.] With the above-mentioned Drawings the curious reader may see three different Views of this beautiful lake, all exactly copied after nature. The first, of the whole lake, taken from Lodore, and terminated by Skiddow. The second, taken from the parsonage-house, and terminated by Borrodale. The third, from Hill-top, with Callow-cragg appearing on the fore-ground; and also One of the cascade.

Far other scenes Their minds employ,
And move their hearts with softer joy.

For pleasures They need never roam, 300
Theirs with affection dwell, at home.

Thrice happy They at home to prove
A Parent's and a Brother's love,

Her bright example pleas'd to trace,
Learn every virtue every grace, 305

Which lustre give in female life
To daughter, sister, parent, wife;
Grateful to see her guardian care

A tender father's loss repair,
And, rising far o'er grief and pain, 310
The glories of her race maintain.

THEIR antient seats let others fly
To strole beneath a foreign sky,
Or loytering in their villas stay,
Till useles summers waste away, 315

While

While, hopeless of their lords' return,
 The poor exhausted tenants mourn ;
 From Lowther She disdains to run
 To bask beneath a southern sun,
 Opens the hospitable door,
 Welcomes the friend, relieves the poor ;
 Bids tenants share the lib'ral board,
 And early know and love their lord,
 Whose courteous deeds to all extend,
 And make each happy guest a friend.
 To smiling Earth the grateful Main
 Thus gives her gather'd streams again
 In flowers on hill and dale and plain.

320

325

O may the virtues, which adorn
 With modest beams his rising morn,
 Unclouded grow to perfect day !
 May He with bounty's brightest ray

330

The

The natives chear, enrich the soil,
 With arts improve, reward their toil,
 Glad with kind warmth our northern sky,
 And generous Lonsdale's loss supply.

335

—*enrich the soil &c.*] The late Lord Lonsdale spared no expence of money or time to introduce woollen and linen Manufactures into the county of Westmoreland; to improve the natives in the art of husbandry by his own example, and encourage them by suitable rewards. Besides conferring premiums on those who excell'd, he also, in order to conquer the force of ignorance and prejudice, more obstinate perhaps than the soil, apprenticed out into neighbouring counties, which were more skilled in agriculture, several sons of his tenants for that laudable purpose; and laid them under obligation to return again, and exercise that Art, for a certain term, in their own country.

HERE the Author thinks himself bound to acknowledge, that he owes the Explanatory Notes, on the description of the mines, to Dr. Brownrigg of Whitehaven.—The kind and friendly design with which they were sent to him, will best appear from the letter which accompany'd them; and which is here subjoined. If the inquisitive reader should desire to see a larger specimen of that Gentleman's knowledge of philosophical and commercial subjects, he would recommend him to a treatise entituled, "The art of making Common Salt, as now practised in most parts of the world; with several Improvements proposed in that art, for the use of the British dominions; by William Brownrigg, M. D. and F. R. S." but that it is now, he believes, out of print. However he may have his curiosity in some degree gratified, by a good account of that work, given by Mr. Watson in the Philosophical Transactions, N^o 487, for the months of April, May, and part of June, 1748.

A LETTER to the AUTHOR.

S I R,

I Give you thanks for the pleasure I have received in the perusal of your poem, heightened perhaps by a fondness for every thing that you have there so elegantly described. I am however apprehensive, that such of your readers as are unacquainted with your subject, may not have the same relish for several parts of your performance. Much of the pleasure which we receive from descriptions of the country must arise from recalling to mind those rural scenes that have given us delight, and from comparing them with their representations; and observing with what art and judgment those representations are copied after nature. And altho' the scenes delineated in your poetic land skips, seem as beautifully varied, and as well adapted to give pleasure to the judicious as those that are most admired in other countries, and may serve as excellent models for the embellishment of rural situations: yet, it must be owned that, in this part of your poem, you labour under some disadvantage, from the choice of your subject in a retired part; which does not fall so much under the eye of the curious as Windsor Forest and some other places, whose charms have been displayed by some of our best poets. However, very happily for you, though your Brother has devoted the largest share of his time and study this summer to the adorning our New Church with his Painting, yet he has found leisure to make very exact Drawings of the places you describe. These, as they are the best comment on this part of your work, will, I hope, in a great measure remove the difficulty here hinted at; and the Public will have the pleasure of seeing the sister arts mutually reflecting light upon each other, and conspiring, by a friendly emulation, to set off these beautiful scenes to the best advantage.

Another part of your performance will, I am afraid, be attended with greater difficulties. Your descriptions of the country must be generally understood; and, like a fine picture, will be admired by many who do not know the original; although they will be read with most delight by those who are best acquainted with your subject. But few of your readers will have such a knowledge of mines as will enable them to follow you through their dark and intricate labyrinths. More especially, as these are a subject that has not, I think, before been attempted in verse. And yet they seem well to deserve the notice of our poets, as
they

they abound in objects proper to excite admiration, and are one great source of the wealth and power of these kingdoms. Here it may be worth the while to stop a little, and reflect on the labour and dangers that They sustain, who, from the mines, supply us with many necessaries and conveniencies of life: what multitudes of people by them are maintained: what efforts of human reason are there exerted, in the most ingenious inventions: and what immense treasures are thence raised, by which numberless wheels are set on motion in the complicated machine of commerce. The subterranean regions, hitherto delineated by the luxuriant fancies of poets, are widely different from these great funds of treasure. And as the veracity of those poets, who have descended into the lower regions, hath often been called in question, some may even suspect that you also have indulged yourself in this poetic licence, and have related such things of these dark abodes as would best appear in verse, rather than as you really found them in nature. To obviate which suspicions, may it not be necessary to produce authentic vouchers of your having faithfully described such objects as occurred to you in the coal-mines? Had Cervantes taken this method, his wonderful account of a certain cave would perhaps have met with more credit than it now does, notwithstanding his artful insinuation of its having been believed by a very great scholar. The Explanatory Notes, which, agreeable to your request, I send inclosed, and which you are at liberty to publish with your poem, may serve as a sort of circumstantial proof of the truth of your descriptions. You will readily perceive that the nature of your design would not allow me to write an history of collieries, or a philosophical dissertation on damps. I have therefore contented myself with relating a few facts which may throw some light on this part of your poem, and may help to render your description of the mines intelligible to your readers.

I am, &c.

Whitehaven,
Nov. 20, 1754.

W. BROWNRIGG.

...of the power of the king ...
...on the labour and ...
...with many necessities and ...
...of people ...
...is the most ingenious invention ...
...which are set on ...
...The ...
...the widely different ...
...of their ...
...in question, some ...
...in the poetic ...
...as would ...
...obvious which ...
...your having ...
...that ...
...would perhaps ...
...his actual ...
...explanatory ...
...which you are ...
...essential ...
...the name of ...
...in ...
...a few facts which ...
...help to render your description of the ...

I am, Sir,

W. Brown

1840

